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201111Z Oct 05

ACTION DINT-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AF-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	INL-00
	DOEE-00	EAP-00	EUR-00	UTED-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	M-00
	AC-00	NEA-00	NSAE-00	OES-00	NIMA-00	EPAU-00	MCC-00
	GIWI-00	ACE-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	SS-00	R-00	EPAE-00
	SCRS-00	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/000W		

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FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2480
INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
DEPT OF INTERIOR WASHDC
USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE

UNCLAS NDJAMENA 001556

SIPDIS

SECSTATE FOR AF/C, AF/EPS, OES
ACCRA FOR USAID/WARP REO, R. CLAUSEN
LIBREVILLE FOR REO, M. CASSETTA
DEPT OF INTERIOR FOR FWS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: SENV CD
SUBJECT: MITIGATING THE HUMAN FOOTPRINT IN CHAD

¶1. Summary. Wildlife biologist, Michael Fay, and a group of eight NGOs/foundations will soon undertake an ambitious effort to develop a long-term conservation plan to preserve Chad's wildlife populations. Program manager Jean-Marc Froment from the group, African Parks Conservation, accompanied by Chadian wildlife specialist, Dr. Dolmia Malachie, briefed the Embassy October 19 on this and other environmental projects scheduled to take place in the near future. End summary.

¶2. Three previous trips to Chad this year by wildlife biologist, Michael Fay, have resulted in increased exposure of its environmental issues and potentialities to the scientific community, to conservation groups and to the public at large, both in the U.S. and in Chad. For U.S. audiences, the September 2005 special issue of National Geographic on Africa included the results of Fay's "Human Footprint Project," graphically illustrating the impact of people on the continent and including photographs and commentary about Chad. For the Chadian audience, Fay gave a presentation to environmental groups and officials during his November 2004 visit. He returned in March 2005 to conduct an aerial survey, with Dolmia, of large mammals in the Zakouma National Park; they counted 3,885 elephants, 5,082 water buffalo, and 1,335 damalisk antelope, while estimating population numbers for some of the other species. He will return to Chad next week with a new airplane to undertake a new, more ambitious effort.

¶3. Impressed by Chad's wildlife populations and its rugged, remote desert regions which include the Tibesti Mountains and the Ennedi massif, Fay and a group of eight environmental NGOs and foundations have begun arriving in Chad for a four-month project which will result in a long-term conservation plan for the country. A number of specific studies are to be conducted during this period, including another aerial survey of large mammals, this time focusing on the desert regions where the addax and oryx once roamed in large herds. Though it is likely that a number of specific zones throughout Chad will be identified and recommended for protective status, the focus of the effort seems to be on areas north of latitude 16. Strategies and funding mechanisms will also be recommended.

¶4. Hoping to build on past successes of Paul Fentener van Vlissingen, a business leader who is funding the management of several wildlife game reserves in Africa and who has expressed an interest in becoming more involved in French-speaking African countries, the African Parks Conservation and its partners in this effort intend to explore such avenues of private funding for the areas included in their conservation plan. They also intend to approach the ESSO oil production project to see if there might be private sector interest there. The model used by

the Dutch conservationist involves subcontracting park management to private companies, and this is likely the model which would be recommended for Chad.

15. During this briefing from the African Parks Conservation representative, Embassy officers were also told that additional National Geographic coverage of Chad's environment and wildlife is expected in the near future.

16. Comment. Embassy continues to believe that fragile states such as Chad which teeter on the brink of both political instability and environmental disaster need the appropriate assistance programs to shore them up. This explains our insistence that an environmental strategic goal be retained in the FY 2007 MPP. The presence of 200,000 refugees from Sudan, currently having a negative impact on the environment in eastern Chad, can be traced in part to natural resource constraints in the Darfur and poor stewardship of the environment. Embassy is appreciative of the modest amounts of assistance received in previous years from the Department of Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service and ESF allowances from AF which have been well utilized and have made significant differences in the environments of communities where those resources have been allocated. A

growing recognition on the part of the NGO community and private foundations that Chad still has an environment worth preserving, and that there are enough concerned individuals to make it happen, is a positive development which we intend to encourage and support.

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